

**MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF SEAT PLEASANT
SPECIAL MEETING
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2011
5:00P.M.**

1. OPENING

1.1.1 Call to Order

Council President Gatling called the meeting to order at 5:04p.m.

1.1.2 Roll Call

Present: Councilmember Latasha Gatling, Mayor Eugene Grant, Councilmember Darrell Hardy, Councilmember Kelly Porter, Councilmember Gerald R. Raynor, Sr., Councilmember Elenora Simms, Councilmember Aretha Stephenson
Councilmember Reveral Yeargin

Staff: Dashaun Lanham, City Clerk, Juliette Brown, Special Assistant to the Mayor

Mrs. Amanda Feggans, Mr. Charles Ruffin was in attendance.

1.1.3 Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance:

The invocation was given by Councilman Yeargin

1.1.4. Approval of Agenda

Council President Gatling stated that the agenda could not be modified in a Special Session and thus it is approved.

2. PRESENTATIONS:

- None

3. LEGISLATION:

- None

4. MEETING TOPICS:

- 4.1.1. None

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- Council President Gatling stated the City Council met on Friday, February 18, 2011 and they have some questions and concerns regarding the development of the Feggans Center.
- Councilwoman Simms stated that we met and had some concerns regarding the engineering survey. The letter dated December 23, 2009 spells out the concerns of the council regarding the engineer survey.
- Mayor Grant stated that last year he chaired the Feggans Center Committee along with Councilman Kelly Porter, Councilwoman LaTasha Gatling and Councilwoman Elenora Simms. The committee met and selected the services of the Technical Writing firm, Architectural firm and a financial firm and reports were giving to the committee.
- Councilwoman Simms wanted to know the survey of the engineer to see if the Feggans Center can be re-opened. She thought the engineer was to review the building and determine if the building was sound. Mayor Grant said that isn't what they were contracted to do. He stated that the survey was giving to the Council and residents and the architect developed the drawings. He stated that the \$225,000 received in the bond bill isn't enough to replace the roof. The mold is a concern, and we will need to replace the electrical and HVAC.
- Councilman Yeargin stated that the Mayor was missing that the foundation was crumbling in certain areas. Mayor Grant stated that he isn't knowledgeable about the foundation of the building. Mayor Grant stated that the information he received from Mr. Oliver contradicts Councilman Yeargin statement.
- Councilwoman Gatling stated that her concerns are what can be done to have the Feggans Center opened now. She isn't concerned about will be done around the Feggans Centers. She said that she isn't in agreement with the city giving up any land, as she feels the City has given up too much land over the years. She is only interested in the Feggans Center. She doesn't want to give up the park.
- Mayor Grant stated that with respect you can do anything when you have money. He feels that it would be a waste of tax payer money to redevelop the building. We can build another building. There was talk about changing the doors and bringing rest rooms on the inside of the building to eliminate a renter access to the entire building. He stated that all of the building will need to be reconstructed the entire building.
- Councilwoman Gatling wanted to know if we have received an estimate on renovating the building or gutting the building. Mayor Grant stated that you

are now talking about \$2,000,000,000. Mayor Grant stated that the survey completed by the residents is what has developed the drawings. Early on in the process Councilwoman Gatling and Simms wanted multiple buildings and he wanted just one building. Councilwoman Gatling stated that she doesn't recall making the statement on multiple buildings. Mayor Grant stated that we can get estimates out of the current budget. He stated that as leaders for the community we need to look at what is the best for our city.

- Councilwoman Simms wanted to know if we had enough money to determine if the building was structurally sound. Mayor Grant said yes, the monies may be in the budget.
- Councilman Yeargin stated that he has worked in construction for 25 plus years. He stated that if you project the next ten years. The building would be inadequate during that time. He feels that this building is inadequate. He feels that anything that is done in the building would require too much.
- Councilwoman Gatling stated that everyone is in agreement with Councilman Yeargin statement regarding the building. She said she doesn't feel everyone is saying just the current structure as it is. She wants to know what we are going with existing building by tearing down or rebuilding three buildings. She stated that we need to have a plan for the present day Feggans Center. Once we decide if we are going to gut, tear down or rebuild we need to have an idea and plan of what we want.
- -Mayor Grant stated that are we saying that we will ignore the process and start over. Mrs. Feggans wanted to know if she could ask a question. Councilwoman Gatling asked the City Council if they would allow Mrs. Feggans to ask a question. It was the consensus of the council for her to ask her questions. Mrs. Feggans asked Mayor Grant that if the project is going to cost \$31,000,000,000. Where was the City going to get the money? Mayor Grant stated that we were going to do public/private partnership. Mayor Grant stated that the project must be attractive enough for the public/private partnership. Councilman Hardy stated that he agrees with Mrs. Feggans and wanted to know can we just do a little at a time and the public/private partnership can still come to the table. Mayor Grant stated it must attractive enough for the partnership to come.
- Mayor Grant stated that this is the way development is done. Councilman Hardy stated that if the big picture is painted. How soon can we develop the site? Mayor Grant stated that we can start the development in June for the New Town Hall and Feggans Center. Councilwoman Gatling wanted to know where the money will come from to build the Feggans Center and Town Hall.

- Councilman Porter stated that this area has been looked upon for development. If you look to the left development is taking place. We have been told for years that this is a prime time to build. Mayor Grant stated that he wanted to maintain some of the integrity that the Council has regarding the park. He stated that this has happened in several other areas New Carrollton, Bowie, Greenbelt and District Heights will begin soon. If we don't start now Capitol Heights will begin to develop. He stated that being on the committee it was said that we have many ways it can be develop. Councilman Hardy stated that everyone agrees with the Mayor plans, but how soon can we get it done.
- Councilwoman Stephenson wanted to know if the residents would be responsible for any of the private partnership. Mayor Grant stated that he was sure he understood the question. However, it is too late for us to join on the Port Towns Green initiative. Mayor Grant stated that the City has \$225,000 and Global has \$350,000 and the money can be partnered together. Global can pay for the building permits. The City monies can be put into the development of the building. He stated yes to Councilwoman Stephenson that the citizens would be responsible for some. Councilwoman Stephenson stated that she spoke with Senator Benson today regarding the project and she stated that we can put the residents in debt.
- Councilwoman Gatling wanted to know what is the interest would the builders have in developing the Feggans Center and Town Hall. The benefit for the developer is senior building and tax incentive for the developer.
- Councilman Yeargin stated that we have the three P's working in our favor. We have a plan, property and purpose. If we did not have anything no one would be looking into the city. He said that if we don't do something we would look the same old and dilapidated.
- Mayor Grant stated that he agreed with Councilwoman Simms that the Council needs to make a decision. We have spent \$30,000 on the development study of Martin Luther King this project would begin that project. He stated that this is the consistent with overall development that was stated by Former Mayor Kennedy.
- Councilman Porter stated that his concern is as he last spoke. We have had several studies done on the site. He feels that he has the understanding because of the studies being done in the past. He feels that we are in better position to move forward. Many things have taken place around us and the Sub Region IV plans. He stated that he would like to see what we can do to have the project moved forward. He thinks it necessary that the Council be

as open as possible. We have not had any development in a long time. He stated that private/public partnership is the way things are being done now. He feels that if they do nothing it would be hard for people to take the city serious in the future. He stated that roof was done three times since he has been on council. They had put several thousands of dollars on the roof at one time. The project will be done in a phases.

- Councilman Hardy stated that the Council concern wasn't against the project or the development of the project. The Council concern was what could be done with the Feggans Center now. He stated that if it could be done in June, let's get started.
- Mayor Grant stated he doesn't feel the current building is the best use for the city. He isn't tied to the building by name. This isn't a pipe a dream, but the country was built on private/public partnership. Mayor Grant stated that the committee hasn't finished its job. The work was done by professional. The way that the committee works is the committee meet and report back to the full council. We have usurped our process. He stated that if Mrs. Feggans and others want to have their tax payer money pay for the project. Then let it be done.
- Councilwoman Simms stated that we just came here tonight for clarity. She stated that he clarified what the engineer study. She stated that we are back to square one, as we don't know how much it is going to cost us to do the building. We need to know what we are going to be working with. Mayor Grant stated that what you do know is we have \$225,000 as a bond bill. We know that the roof will cost us up to \$600,000. We know the building will need mold removed office space built, etc. We are up to \$1,000,000,000.00. If you are willing to do that than you will do just what Senator Benson said cost your tax payer money. He stated that you have heard some people state that they don't care about anything after 2012. He said will he does because he cares about this city. He stated that he would not be in support of that. He stated that the best model is private/public partnership. He stated that he isn't able to talk about some things openly, but he may be able to get the Feggans Center built for free. He said that some programs under the O'Bama Administration will be ending. We are losing the ability to go after certain dollars. He stated this isn't a Mayor Grant project or a pipe dream. We had professional development firms prepare and present these forms to us. He said his philosophy was one building. He said the citizens and the committee made the decision. He said the only thing we didn't do as a committee was follow back up to make a decision and report back to the Council.

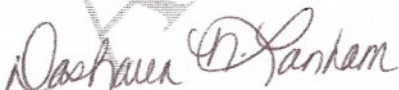
- Councilman Yeargin stated that we the Council no longer need to delay this process. If you choose to delay this process you may as well get off the Council. This will look bad for you in 2012. He said we have not had any development in 30 years. He said this is a major. He said he doesn't want to be a part of the group that want things not a part of a group that wants to complain.
- Councilman Raynor asked Mayor Grant what we need to do from here Mayor Grant stated that he has been hearing some things through the rumor mill of the concerns with some of the committee members. He said for the most part the committee has everything they need. In particular the report from Park and Planning, which stated that you can get started with the Feggans Center and Town Hall buildings. He said that Mrs. Feggans and Councilwoman Gatling concern was the commercial building. He was thinking of a small CVS and maybe a convenient store. He isn't thinking of a business for mumble sauce. He said a senior center can be built and it would be the only center in the inner beltway. He said he is offended and angry at the statement of a pipe dream. He said that the Laurel and Bowie have the only senior centers, but that is okay because they are white and when a black man makes the statement it is a pipe dream.
- Councilman Yeargin stated that he can see the development take place. He wants to see some new bricks including his home. If anyone doesn't want to see anything done in the city they need to leave.
- Councilman Raynor wanted to know the legality on private/public partnership. Mayor Grant stated that we have an attorney review and make a decision, but it should not be Sussman. He said that he has been in the City for over 20 years and witnessed decision being made out or personality. The decisions are being made out of your personality. He said he isn't speaking against Sussman, but it isn't his field of expertise. He said the disadvantage would be to not get something done. We have report and a comprehensive review from Park & Planning. They sat down with Mayor Grant, Mr. Ashton and April Bonner his previous Special Assistant. They met with the engineer after the park and planning pointed out the pros and cons of the project. We need to make sure we that we have an iron clad project.
- Councilwoman Stephenson wanted to know how much will be the project cost our seniors. Mayor Grant stated that he appreciated her questions. The process will be through HUD and it is for seniors on a fixed income.
- Councilwoman Simms stated that the Council may want to have additional discussion with the Mayor regarding the project. She suggested that the

Council put their concerns and/or ideas in writing by the next Work Session. She stated to the Mayor that we are not closing the door to the project. We are looking to have the Feggans Center re-open. She said that it is the information from the constituent. Mayor Grant stated the Park & Planning stated that you can get the building permit within 30 days. He said it is a process. June will be the ground breaking process. He doesn't mean you will see a building in July.

- Councilman Raynor wanted to know if there is another process that needs to come before the Council. Mayor Grant said no the council needs to make a decision. Mayor Grant stated that the City has the money to do it. He said we need to meet with the architect to discuss the building. He said we need to meet with Global and discuss the bond bill and what the City's wants to do with the building. He said we have out grown this building the Council no longer has an office space in this building. There is talk about bringing on an Economic Development person. Where are they going to sit? He said we are not going back to the 1950's where there was private club meeting. It was illegal and wrong.
- **6. ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- **6.1.1.** Crime Prevention Training, Saturday, March 5, 2011, City Hall, at 9:00a.m.
- **6.1.2.** Regular Work Session, Monday, March 7, 2011, City Hall-Council Chambers at 6:00p.m.
- **6.1.3.** Public Session, Monday, March 14, 2011, City Hall-Council Chambers at 7:00p.m.
- **6.1.4.** 24th District Night, Monday, March 21, 2011, Lowe House Building, Annapolis, MD at 5:30p.m.

ADJOURN- The meeting adjourned at 6:32p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Dashaun N. Lanham
City Clerk